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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the priority areas of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons. The Programme will continue to publish print and electronic versions of the newly redesigned two-part *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, which is available on its website (http://disarmament.un.org). The content of the website has grown exponentially and it is being used more and more by Member States, conference participants, non-governmental organizations and the general public alike to access daily updates of documents and statements, including video messages. Web sites for specific meetings and conferences are being further developed. The Office will continue to facilitate the participation of civil society organizations in disarmament-related meetings and conferences and collaborate closely with coalitions of non-governmental organizations that spearhead such participation. The present report also gives details of the many contributions of the Department of Public Information to the dissemination of information on disarmament.

* A/63/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/95, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-third session a report covering the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The Programme is administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in close collaboration with the Department of Public Information, in particular on information campaigns focused on major disarmament-related events and conferences.

2. The objectives of the Disarmament Information Programme reflect the overall orientation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, guided by the priorities of Member States as enunciated in the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

3. On 15 March 2007, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/257, by which, inter alia, it supported the establishment of an Office for Disarmament Affairs and the appointment of a High Representative as head of the Office. One of the four core functions of the High Representative is advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society. The High Representative interacts with the media, think-tank organizations, academia and civil society organizations that play a vital role in building and activating public opinion in respect of disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Hence, the overall advocacy role of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in mobilizing political will to overcome the stalemate in disarmament and non-proliferation has been strengthened.

4. In the area of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, especially nuclear weapons, high priority was accorded to the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Vienna, 30 April-11 May 2007 and Geneva, 28 April-9 May 2008), entailing an increased demand for information by the diplomatic community, other international and civil society organizations, the media and the general public.

5. In the field of conventional weapons, priority was accorded to the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York from 14 to 18 July 2008. Again, the Office for Disarmament Affairs was required to mobilize resources to meet the demand for information from various sectors.

6. The importance of the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to grow, as evidenced by the substantial amount of time spent by visitors on the site. Dedicated websites were designed for major disarmament-related conferences, including the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference and the Third Biennial Meeting of States, as well as in connection with issues such as efforts to achieve an arms trade treaty.

7. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 61/73, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report reviewing the results of the implementation of

the recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124) and possible new opportunities for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education, and to submit it to the Assembly at its sixty-third session. A separate report has been issued on this item (A/63/158) and should be read in conjunction with the present report.

8. In a series of resolutions adopted at its sixty-second session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the usefulness of the Office's three regional centres — in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean — in carrying out dissemination and educational programmes. Separate reports to the General Assembly on the three regional centres provide detailed information about their activities (A/63/157, A/63/163 and A/63/178).

9. The United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services continues to be the Office's largest annual training programme. A separate report on its activities has been submitted to the Assembly (A/63/129).

10. In accordance with the standing request of the General Assembly asking the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to report to the Assembly on the activities of the Institute on a yearly basis, accounts of the information and education activities of the Institute for the past two years are contained in separate reports transmitted by the Secretary-General for consideration by the Assembly (see A/62/152 and A/63/XXX).

11. Funding for the Disarmament Information Programme continues to be derived from the regular budget and from extrabudgetary resources, in particular from the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Programme. The status of the Fund as at 31 December 2007 is contained in the annex to the present report. The Fund continued to benefit from the generosity of Member States and private donors. The Office for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for the donations and support it has received from States and private donors, as listed in the annex.

II. Information resources

A. Publication programme

12. *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* remains the flagship publication of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The English version of the *Yearbook* is issued in a print run of more than 4,000 copies and distributed worldwide to United Nations libraries, as well as to its depository library system, United Nations information centres, all permanent missions in New York and Geneva (in multiple copies), the offices of the regional commissions and parliamentary libraries. It is sold in United Nations bookshops to subscribers and non-subscribers, with several hundred copies of each edition being sold. A copy is distributed to every delegation participating in the work of the First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament. In addition, the *Yearbook* is distributed to approximately 1,300 research institutes, organizations and individuals, mainly in the developing world. The number of institutes receiving it has doubled since the previous reporting period.

13. In order to better meet the needs of users, a change has been made to the format of the *Yearbook*: it is now produced in two parts. Part I replaces the booklet of disarmament resolutions and decisions and contains all the resolutions and

decisions of the previous session of the General Assembly. It will be published yearly, early in spring. Part II addresses the main issues considered at the multilateral level during the year, as well as relevant developments and trends. It will also have a convenient issue-oriented timeline, short summaries of First Committee and General Assembly activity on resolutions and decisions and the full texts of principal multilateral agreements reached during the year and declarations adopted by treaty review conferences. The chart of submissions to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms will also be featured, together with a graph showing regional participation in the Register.

14. The *Yearbook* is also produced in an electronic format which is easily accessible on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The *e-Yearbook* is in both HTML and PDF formats and features full-text search, index search and navigation mechanisms. Electronic versions of the *Yearbook* have been available since 2002.

15. The Programme continued to publish its dark-blue-covered series of studies, in all six official languages of the United Nations. The series, a non-sales publication produced in small quantities, highlights General Assembly studies undertaken by groups of governmental experts, packaging them in an attractive form for wider dissemination and future use. In 2008, study series 32 was released, on the subject of verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification; the report of the First Committee on the agenda item relating to that issue was presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session (A/62/390).

16. The occasional papers series was developed to ensure wider dissemination of the expert input from panels and seminars sponsored by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The publication is produced in English only, disseminated free of charge and posted on the Office website. The following three papers, all of which relate to the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), were issued in the period under review:

(a) *Occasional Paper* No. 11, October 2006, "United Nation Seminar on Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 in Asia and the Pacific", based on an outreach seminar held in Beijing in July 2006 and attended by 67 participants from 28 countries as well as international organizations;

(b) *Occasional Paper* No. 12, May 2007, "United Nations Seminar on Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 in Africa", based on an outreach seminar held in Accra in November 2006 and attended by 50 participants from 21 countries as well as subregional and international organizations;

(c) *Occasional Paper* No. 13, December 2007, "United Nations Seminar on Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 in Latin America and the Caribbean", based on a seminar held in Lima in November 2006 and attended by 84 participants from 26 countries as well as regional, subregional and international organizations.

17. In 2007 and 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to produce the e-publication "Disarmament Update", which is aimed at interested members of the public and highlights recent events and activities of the Office and other disarmament forums, linking the reader to fuller material and documents already available on the Office and related websites. Four issues are planned each year.

18. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Small Arms Survey teamed up late in 2006 to publish a report entitled "Developing a mechanism to prevent illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons: scope and implications". The publication was funded by the Governments of the Netherlands and Norway.

19. In July 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs published a booklet entitled "Small arms and light weapons: selected United Nations documents" in advance of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 14 to 18 July. The booklet was designed to provide diplomats and other Government officials and regional and subregional bodies, the United Nations system, specialized non-governmental organizations, research institutes, educators, students and the general public with an easy-to-use compendium of key documents, relevant to the subject, including international instruments, and reports and resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. An electronic version of the booklet is also available online.

20. Also in July 2008, the Office for Disarmament Affairs published a booklet entitled "Disarmament 2007: critical disarmament issues", covering the proceedings of four panel discussions organized in 2007 by the NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security in cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The booklet is part of a series of publications within the framework of the mandate of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme. The booklet covers topics under the following headings: "A verifiable fissile-material treaty as a foundation for nuclear disarmament", "A code of conduct for outer space", "Technical advances and field experiences for use in biological verification" and "Towards a global cleanout of nuclear weapon materials". The transcripts included in the publication are also available online.

B. Website

21. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to maintain and improve both the substantive content and technical delivery of its website.

22. The overall design of the website remains oriented towards specific issues. The priorities of the Office determine its core content. Its front page provides the latest disarmament-related United Nations press releases and statements of the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials, including the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as publications, information about current and upcoming events in the field of disarmament, relevant background documentation and links to significant United Nations partners. Its substantive pages give background information on the topic being explored and store a wealth of information on major disarmament-related conferences. Documentation in all official languages relating to such conferences is posted on the website. In conjunction with the Department of Public Information, the Office for Disarmament Affairs is working on a new, user-friendly layout and design for its website which should reduce the number of layers in the process of information retrieval. In addition, the new website will comply with guidelines to allow accessibility to users with disabilities, including those who are blind or have limited vision.

23. The Office is continuing to monitor the performance of its website. Monthly statistics are kept relating to the number of hits and visitors, peak hours and the days the website is accessed. Regular monitoring has improved the Office's understanding of the kind of information that is being sought and who is seeking it.

24. The number of visitors to the site has doubled since the previous report of August 2006 (A/61/215), with more than 35,000 unique visitors using the site. The total number of sessions has increased by a factor of 50 per cent. The average time individual users spend on the website has increased by 20 per cent. The top users of the website, measured by the time they spend on the site, are Government agencies (mainly ministries of foreign affairs), educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. The two most visited sections of the site are the database of General Assembly resolutions and decisions on disarmament and the pages on the status and texts of disarmament-related treaties.

25. Expanding the multilingual version of the website continues to be a major challenge. Only when documentation exists in all United Nations official languages is the Office able to post it quickly and easily. It is expected that the new website, which is currently being developed, will have its home page content available in all official United Nations languages.

C. Exhibitions

26. Exhibitions play an important role in promoting advocacy and providing information on a conference or other topics through the promotion of governmental and non-governmental positions. Such exhibitions have become an expected fixture of United Nations conferences.

27. On the margins of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Office for Disarmament Affairs facilitated an exhibition by the Pacific Information Office, a non-governmental organization based in Germany, on the effects of nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific region. In addition, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, which is located in Vienna, mounted an exhibition on its verification regime and technical capabilities, facilitated by the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

28. The Office for Disarmament Affairs facilitated an exhibition by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at Headquarters to mark the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. The exhibition illustrated the negative effects of the use of chemical warfare agents and the international efforts to ban that class of weapon of mass destruction, highlighting the role and work of the organization. In addition to being displayed in the high-traffic passageway next to the main conference rooms for several weeks, the exhibition also served as the backdrop for a one-day high-level conference held to mark the anniversary, which was attended by the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and attracted considerable media interest.

29. The Office for Disarmament Affairs provided substantive input for an exhibition on small arms and light weapons organized at Headquarters by the Department of Public Information (see para. 44 below).

30. On the margins of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Office for Disarmament Affairs facilitated an exhibition by Soka Gakkai (Buddhist Association for Peace, Culture and Education), a Japan-based non-governmental organization, on transforming the human spirit, which highlighted the dangers associated with nuclear weapons. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs opened the exhibition and made remarks. The Pacific Information Office mounted an exhibition similar to that referred to in paragraph 27 above.

31. On the margins of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Office for Disarmament Affairs facilitated exhibitions by the Regional Centre on Small Arms, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Action Network on Small Arms and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on various aspects related to small arms.

32. The permanent disarmament exhibition section of the United Nations guided tour route on the third floor of the General Assembly building continues to attract visitors. The Secretary-General and Pope Benedict XVI viewed the disarmament exhibition during the Pope's visit to the United Nations in April 2008. The features of the map showing the regions of the world that are part of nuclear-weapon-free zones has recently been enhanced and updated to include the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. The Office for Disarmament Affairs is working on the production of a magnet and a postcard-size version of the map for general distribution.

III. Information activities

A. Conferences and panel discussions

33. On the margins of the meetings of the First Committee, the Office for Disarmament Affairs sponsored a panel discussion with the Global Security Institute on the topic of the United Nations and security, which was held on 11 October 2006. Panellists discussed furthering United Nations efforts to achieve a more secure and peaceful world.

34. In June 2007, the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-organized a conference on the theme "A firm and lasting peace in Central America: the pending agenda 20 years later" to mark the anniversary of the Esquipulas II Agreement, which defined a number of measures to promote national reconciliation and an end to hostilities in Central America. The President of Costa Rica, Óscar Arias Sánchez, who spearheaded the Nobel Peace Laureates' proposal for an international arms trade treaty, attended the conference. The former President of Guatemala, Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo, a key negotiator of the 1997 accords, also participated in the event. The Secretary-General addressed the conference. The organizers of the conference

included the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, the Albert Schweitzer Institute (Quinnipiac University), the United Nations Development Programme, the Project on Justice in Times of Transition, the Toledo International Centre for Peace, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the University of Peace (Costa Rica).

35. In conjunction with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office for Disarmament Affairs held a panel discussion on 15 July 2008 on the issue of children and small arms. The event took advantage of the Third Biennial Meeting of States on small arms to raise awareness of the effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on children in armed conflict and in zones of instability, and to explore solutions through advocacy activities, peace education and international law, with a view protecting the affected children. The Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, a peace educator and a small-arms expert participated in the event. The special guest at the event was Emanuel Jal, a musician and former southern Sudanese child soldier, who is currently the spokesman for the Make Poverty History campaign, the Control Arms campaign and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. While at United Nations Headquarters, Mr. Jal held interviews with United Nations Radio and United Nations Television to shed light on the issue.

B. Activities of the Secretary-General's Messenger of Peace

36. Over the past two years, Michael Douglas, a Messenger of Peace since 30 July 1998, has continued to use his celebrity status to attract attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the impact of illicit small arms proliferation. The Department of Public Information is the lead office for the activities of the Messengers of Peace and acts in cooperation with the substantive office (in this case the Office for Disarmament Affairs) for activities relating to disarmament issues. During the period under review, Mr. Douglas made a number of contributions, including those set out below:

(a) In September 2006, Mr. Douglas participated, together with several other Messengers of Peace, in a full day of activities to commemorate the International Day of Peace, including attendance at the annual Peace Bell ceremony with the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly and an event at which the Messengers interacted with young people at Headquarters and, through satellite, with United Nations missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Kosovo. Short films documenting the impact of conflict on the lives of people in those war-ridden places were shown during the event. Mr. Douglas also had meetings and briefings with senior Secretariat officials. Mr. Douglas participated in similar events for the International Day of Peace in 2007, including a student observance, during which 700 middle and high school students in New York, including young refugees from Peru and the Sudan, were connected via satellite to young people at the United Nations missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon and the Sudan. The Messengers of Peace and students exchanged views on the theme "Peace: a climate of change";

(b) In May 2008, Mr. Douglas conducted radio and television interviews and participated in round-table discussions with policymakers and journalists concerning

disarmament and non-proliferation, parts of which were posted on the Internet. In addition, he held discussions with senior members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America.

C. Briefings

37. At the request of the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department of Public Information, or directly from individual institutions, staff members of the Office for Disarmament Affairs undertook between 35 and 40 briefing engagements per year over the reporting period, representing approximately 80 staff hours dedicated to education and training activities for the benefit of some 1,500 external participants, including (a) student visitors in the framework of university programmes dealing with the United Nations; (b) members of United Nations associations from various countries; (c) foreign ministry trainees; (d) students preparing for the model United Nations exercises; and (e) visiting members of non-governmental organizations (see also para. 55 below).

38. Staff members of the Office for Disarmament Affairs participated in numerous discussions on arms control, disarmament and security issues organized by research or university-related institutes or think tanks throughout the world.

39. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and staff from the Office have participated in interviews with television, radio and print outlets. Attention has also been given to new media, such as Internet broadcasting and video messages.

IV. Cooperation with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations

40. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to maintain close contact with two major non-governmental organization coalitions, Reaching Critical Will in the nuclear field and the International Action Network on Small Arms in connection with small arms and light weapons, for the purpose of coordinating participation in major conferences. A total of 131 non-governmental organizations were accredited by and participated in the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (66 for the first session and 65 for the second). In the area of small arms, 335 non-governmental organizations were accredited by and participated in the 2008 Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the largest number ever, with an increase of 60 per cent over attendance at the 2006 review conference. Also, for the first time, the number of new non-governmental organizations requesting accreditation surpassed that of already accredited organizations.

41. The Office continued to cooperate with the NGO Committee on Disarmament and the Department of Public Information in facilitating panel discussions covering a range of topical issues in 2006 and 2007 during Disarmament Week. Similar programmes are planned for the next two years.

V. Activities of the Department of Public Information

42. The Department of Public Information continues to help raise public awareness and understanding of the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, arms control and related fields, including by promoting the Organization's outputs and outreach activities.

A. Public information campaigns

43. During the reporting period, the Department worked on the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy for the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006. The Department used various information and communications tools, including press releases, promotional materials, featured radio and television stories and a dedicated website, as well as outreach projects, to call attention to the dangers associated with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to raise awareness of the progress made by the United Nations and its Member States in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

B. Exhibitions

44. One element of the communications strategy was the mounting at Headquarters of an exhibition on small arms. Developed jointly by the Department of Public Information and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the exhibition was well received. Subsequently, the photographic segment of that popular exhibition travelled to several countries, including India, Kenya, Mexico and South Africa.

C. United Nations information centres, services and offices

45. The Department of Public Information network of 63 United Nations information centres, services and offices carried out various public information activities in the field of disarmament and arms control, comprising media outreach activities, including journalist training and tours, educational outreach efforts through model United Nations programmes, special events, videoconferences, the production and dissemination of information material, including in local languages, and outreach to the general public through seminars, lectures, conferences and exhibitions.

46. Many information centres promoted the 2006 United Nations small arms review conference, in particular by distributing information material, organizing exhibitions and panel discussions and arranging radio and television programmes and broadcasts of public service announcements. In July 2006, the information centres in Moscow and Rio de Janeiro organized a seminar and briefing in connection with the review conference, while the information centre in Pretoria, in collaboration with South African non-governmental organizations and a think tank, organized a panel discussion on disarmament and non-violence. Several information centres, including those in Lusaka, Nairobi and Ouagadougou, facilitated radio and

television programmes. A televised debate on combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms, initiated by the information centre in Ouagadougou, was broadcast on national and private television, with an audience of more than 5 million people.

47. Many United Nations information centres were successful in placing the public service announcement on the illicit trade of small arms, featuring United Nations Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas, on national and cable television. At the initiative of the information centre in Buenos Aires, the public service announcement was aired 1,100 times on 5 cable television stations in Argentina between July and September 2006. A number of information centres translated information material into local languages, including the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels, which translated United Nations Television materials into Italian and provided them to the Italian State-owned broadcasting service RAI and to the satellite television station Planet Earth. The United Nations office in Armenia collaborated with the Ministry of Culture and Youth and the United Nations Association of Armenia in organizing a model United Nations conference focusing on nuclear disarmament.

48. The United Nations Information Service in Vienna provided, in May 2007, media liaison support for the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and included in its lecture programme briefings on disarmament-related issues, including on the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

49. Throughout the reporting period, the information centres highlighted various disarmament-related issues, including the United Nations efforts on mine action and cluster bombs, the Chemical Weapons Convention and commemorations of the victims of the nuclear bomb explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

D. Internet, television and radio

50. The Department has continued to raise global awareness of disarmament issues through its regular coverage of meetings of relevant United Nations bodies and by reporting on the Organization's activities across the full range of its news network and other information outputs. Full television, webcast, photographic, Internet and radio coverage was provided of the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 2006 small arms review conference and other disarmament-related intergovernmental meetings. More than 250 press releases were issued during the period under review. In addition, disarmament-related developments and issues were covered in more than 200 featured stories on the United Nations News Centre, one of the most heavily visited areas on the United Nations website, which also reaches over 50,000 subscribers to its e-mail service (in English and French). News focus web pages on non-proliferation were also produced. Websites in all six official languages were created for the 2006 small arms review conference (www.un.org/events/smallarms2006), as well as for the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials (www.un.org/sc/1540).

51. As part of its coverage of issues associated with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, United Nations Radio interviewed the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as delegates and experts, in various languages. United Nations Radio carried stories on disarmament throughout the period under review, such as those focusing on a United Nations initiative in Haiti and a conference on small arms in West Africa. The United Nations Television magazine programme, "21st Century", which is carried by a number of major television networks, featured stories about disarmament efforts in the areas of small arms and demining, while the "UN in Action" series similarly presented a number of items on disarmament topics, including a landmine disarmament buffer zone in Cyprus and the work of the laboratories of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

E. Printed materials

52. The Department's *UN Chronicle* produced and disseminated a number of articles on disarmament issues. Comprehensive coverage of the disarmament work of the First Committee was provided for the sixty-first and sixty-second sessions of the General Assembly. The magazine also covered other relevant disarmament themes, including "The Secretary-General's agenda: progress on disarmament required for global security".

F. Civil society and non-governmental organizations

53. In 2007, the Department, in partnership with the Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations Associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information, organized the fifty-ninth annual Conference of the Department of Public Information for Non-Governmental Organizations, on the theme "Unfinished business: effective partnerships for human security and sustainable development", with the participation of 1,500 non-governmental organization representatives and civil society organizations from 62 countries representing 500 organizations. Several conference workshops dealt with salient disarmament issues, such as how reducing weapons of mass destruction contributes to peacebuilding and human security, and what grass-roots efforts can offer.

54. The briefing of the Department of Public Information for Non-Governmental Organizations on 24 April 2008 discussed the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs attended as a guest speaker.

G. Public affairs

55. During the reporting period, the Department organized 36 in-house briefings on disarmament-related issues, which were attended by 938 participants in total (see also para. 37 above). In addition, the film "Blood Diamonds" was screened, and an academic panel discussion was held on the topic, which was also webcast.

VI. Conclusions

56. **During the period under review, the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme continued to focus its activities on information in the field of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.**

57. **Responding to the higher levels of computer literacy and technological capability among its constituents around the globe, the Disarmament Information Programme is orienting its publications to electronic formats. The two-part *Disarmament Yearbook*, the occasional papers series and "Disarmament Update" are available on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.**

58. **The content of the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs has expanded exponentially, and specialized websites have been developed for major conferences, serving as working tools for participants and vectors of public information. With the assistance of the Department for Public Information, the Office for Disarmament Affairs will continue to improve the website with an entirely new design to provide current and accurate information in a dynamic and easily retrievable format.**

59. **The Department of Public Information has highlighted disarmament and arms control issues of topical interest, especially nuclear weapons and small arms and light weapons, in print, on the Internet and in film, television and radio, using its large network of information centres around the world and its outreach capacity. Its use of the celebrity appeal of the Messenger of Peace in respect of arms control issues continues to be effective.**

60. **The Office for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for the support it has received from Governments for the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme and appeals for continued support for its work. It would like to express appreciation in particular to Governments and private donors for their financial contributions to the Trust Fund.**

Annex

Status of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

	(United States dollars)
I. Fund balance as at 1 January 2006	318 165
II. Income	
1 January 2006-31 December 2007	
Voluntary contributions*	39 963
Interest income	35 874
Miscellaneous income	23 496
Subtotal	**99 335**
III. Expenditures	
1 January 2006-31 December 2007	79 012
Programme support	10 272
Subtotal	**89 284**
IV. Fund balance as at 31 December 2007	328 216

Source: based on the statement of income and expenditure for the biennium 2006-2007 ending 31 December 2007. During the period 1 January to 30 June 2008, additional contributions of $51,000 were received from Thailand ($1,000) and a private donor ($50,000).

* 2006: Canada ($6,965), Mexico ($10,000), Republic of Korea ($5,000) and Thailand ($1,000); 2007: Home Box Office, Inc. ($1,000), Mexico ($5,000), Republic of Korea ($10,000) and Thailand ($1,000).